

MAYSVILLE, KY., JULY 28, 1895.

AGRICULTURAL.

[From the Country Gentleman.]

AUTUMN, WINTER AND SPRING MANURING.

A young farmer, whose rotation is corn, barley, wheat, and clover asks to which of these crops he should give his manure, and at what time of the year.

Like nearly everything else in farming, the course to be pursued must vary with circumstances, and the farmer must exercise his judgment to some extent. But the following may be adopted as general rules:

1. The corn should have at least a portion of the manure, if practicable. It is scarcely possible to manure the corn in the field, but if it is properly applied, or so as to be well diffused through the soil.

2. The barley crop needs a good soil, but if the corn has been well manured it will need nothing additional. The great additional points being thorough plowing and harrowing and early sowing.

3. The wheat requires more discretion in its treatment, and actually, on good land, will be sufficiently manured by the previous crops, with the exception of a top-dressing, after the last plowing, of five to ten two-horse loads of fine manure per acre. If oats are sown the second year instead of barley, a moderate manuring besides may prove useful, and sometimes necessary.

The usual accumulations of manure are in winter, but its fitness for application at different times of the year will be controlled by the materials employed in its manufacture. If composed largely of corn fodder, it will be unfit to apply till the following autumn, after rotting down in heaps. But if the corn fodder is all cut with a machine before feeding out, it may be drawn out and spread as fast as produced. Nearly the same remarks will apply to straw, if used in large quantities.

In small quantities, it will not prove better winter application; or if cut up before being used for bedding, from one to four inches long.

Farmers have little fresh manure in autumn. The cheapest application is in winter, drawing out and spreading over the fields requiring it as fast as it is made. Several advantages result from this practice. It requires less handling; it is soon out of the way; it is easily spread from the sled or wagon; it is drawn by men at a time when they may be otherwise idle; it removes the labor from the short and crowded period of spring; it allows the soluble manure to wash down into the earth and become intimately diffused; and it prevents the hardening and baking of the soil by the passage of the loaded wagons, when the ground is wet and soft after the breaking up of winter. It should therefore be the aim to draw out, as it accumulates, all the manure which is short enough to spread well, to plow under in spring, or to use for other spring crops, leaving the longest and coarsest to rot down in heaps for autumn sown wheat, or for spreading on sod which is intended for corn the next year.

We have already remarked that corn can scarcely be manured too much, if the work is properly done. If there is any danger of its running too much to leaf and stalk, which would be a rare occurrence, plant a smaller variety, and allow a larger number of stalks to grow. The succeeding barley, oats, or rye, will receive a decided help from it—especially if the soil has a sufficient quantity of clay to hold the manure, and in good wheat districts its effects will be sufficient to obviate any thing further than a top-dressing. But if the soil is of moderate fertility, or if a heavy crop of oats precede the wheat, these two contingencies should never unite—an application before a shallow plowing, with thorough intermixing by the harrow, may prove advantageous, in addition to the top-dressing at or near the time when the wheat is sown.

We have not yet met the farmer who could make enough manure to obviate the necessity of using clover as a fertilizer, and a combination of the two generally gives excellent results. Manure spread on clover soil in autumn, as we have frequently had occasion to urge, is the best practice for profitable preparation of ground for inverting the following spring for reception of seed corn. It is worth double and sometimes triple the equal application in spring just before plowing under. Spread the manure over such a clover sod, as it accumulates in winter, is greatly superior to spring application, although not equal to autumn manuring on the sod.

As a general outline of directions, we would therefore record:

1. To draw out and spread in winter all manure short enough to turn under for corn.

2. To heap up for rotting down all that is too coarse or long for spring.

3. To apply these heaps to sod intended for corn the next year, or to wheats if the last plowing, doing the work in portions at a time, as the last plowing progresses, so as not to tread the mellow soil with the teams or the wagons.

4. If applied in spring, break the manure and intermix it with the soil by harrowing and then plowing in. Ground intended for rye, lucas may be thus prepared, as well as plenty of time is allowed for intermixing and preparation.

THE CARE OF HARNESS.

Perhaps nothing on a farm better repays the care bestowed on it than harness; few things go so quickly to the bad from neglect.

Now if to the bare consideration of economy (for the article in question is costly,) we add a little for appearance sake in a nicely kept harness, something for the comfort of animals working in well-fitting, flexible leather, and what value you please for the safety to life and limb of owner and beast, we need not apologize for asking attention to this subject as important.

Harness ought to be washed about once a month with a sponge and Castile soap—one strap at a time—and the soap removed by a clear water sponge as soon as the surface is cleaned.

Twice a year it should be oiled, or oiled if much used and frequently wet and dry. Unless you obtain perfectly pure neat's foot oil (such as Peter Gott's) make it yourself. Take the feet of a beef, crush the bones well with a sledge or axe, and boil them in a large pot of water for twelve hours. Make two quarts of tallion from beef tallow, melt it, and pour it into a four-quart can which should have a lid to keep out mice, and place it on the stove. Add a lump of pure yellow wax as large as a hen's egg, stirring it as it melts. Then fill up the can with neat's foot oil, and removing it from the fire, continue to stir until the intermixture is complete. This, when cold, will be of about the same consistency as hog's lard. Keep in the can a bit of sponge always ready for use. It ought to be damp when it first goes into the grease, as it will remain more flexible afterwards than if greased when dry.

Leather which has become dry and horny through long neglect, will receive no benefit from grease applied to it in its dry and hard condition. You must not only have grease of the right sort, but must know how to use it. First, then, take the harness apart wherever it can be unbuckled. If hard, soak it in clear water (not warmer than milk fresh from dairy) for several hours. Then wash the pieces as directed with Castile soap and work them in the hands until they are soft and pliant; and if in very bad condition, this will require care and patience. Hang in a room where they will not dry too rapidly, and do not hang them in the hands until they are soft and pliant; and if in very bad condition, this will require care and patience. Hang in a room where they will not dry too rapidly, and do not hang them in the hands until they are soft and pliant; and if in very bad condition, this will require care and patience.

A white crust like stearine will be left on the surface when the leather is dry, and which can be removed with a dry course cloth. For common work harness nothing more will be needed, but carriage harness may be again washed with the soap sponge and clear water, and wiped with a dry chamois skin. Boots and shoes, of cow-hide, kip or calf skin, ought to be treated in the same way several times a year. If the surface is washed with Castile soap, they will take a superior polish after the second brushing. Try the comfort of such boots, and then I shall be able to appeal to the understandings of O farmers, as well as your interest, when I urge you not to neglect "The Care of Harness."

HINTS TO YOUNG POULTRY-KEEPERS.

Editor Country Gentleman.—Sitting hens eat their eggs from habit, when once by accident they break an egg and get a taste of it, they are ever after liable to eat them. They cannot be cured except by wringing their necks, but occasionally they will stop of themselves. How many eggs ought a hen to sit on? For a large hen, sixteen are plenty; for a medium

sized one, thirteen, and for a eleven small, one or twelve.

Which hens lay the most eggs? Those in their first year lay more than those in their second; those in their second more than those in their third, and so on. Hence it is the best policy to keep young hens.

Lime or burnt oyster shells are essential in winter, must be kept given at least twice a week. Always keep good, healthy, fine-looking roosters, for you remember—good the cock, good the chick. Make a rule of killing off inferior hens, in order to keep up a good laying stock.

How are vermin to be kept out of the poultry-house? Clean out the house frequently and lime well. Frequently make new nests and whitewash thoroughly the nest boxes, roost and every place where lice would be likely to go to. Occasionally grease the fowls on the head and under the wings with lard. The roost should be so constructed that it can be taken down and cleaned. Some few use hen ladders and think them indispensable, but it must be a very bulky bird that cannot fly from perch to perch without falling.

The best food to produce fat is corn, and the best for eggs, wheat, oats, corn, &c., mixed, and meal occasionally. But there is such a thing as over-feeding hens. When I began keeping poultry I was accustomed to feed very extravagantly; several persons told me that I fed too much, but I did not heed them. In consequence, my hens ceased laying (this was in summer when hens should lay well), and one in particular that had stopped laying seemed to walk heavily, and would after a very slight exertion appear greatly fatigued. In about a month she died, and on cutting her open to ascertain the cause of her death, I found that her internal organs were so covered and pressed together by fat as to cause her death. I immediately stopped feeding so liberally, and after a little while my hens got into condition again and recommenced laying.

My observation leads me to think that pruning, as generally done, does more harm than good. Everywhere I go I see trees ruined by pruning. In some cases large limbs are slashed out with an ax. If seen, it is done in such a slovenly manner as to leave a wound that will not heal over in years, and most likely make the tree rotten-hearted. I have seen men go into the orchard and slash out two-thirds of the top of a large tree, without any definite idea of what they were doing—only a very crude idea that it ought to be pruned.

A man in a neighboring town gave a man fourteen dollars to prune his orchard. He had better have given him twice that sum to have staid out. Great limbs cut off with stumps extending from three to six inches from the body—never to heal over. A coarse rasping saw to tear the bark, with the limb allowed to fall and strip down the tree. The stump exposed with no protection from heat, cold or rain. The balance of the tree interfered with so seriously that it soon becomes a prey to disease and insects, and some fine spring is found dead. Yet, the owner congratulating himself that it was no fault of his, as he gave it the best of care, even to pruning. When will people learn that limbs should be taken from the tree with a smooth clean cut, and so near to the parent stem that the sap wood will speedily cover over the wound? Every considerable wound should be covered with wax, varnish or paint, to keep out water and protect it while healing.

People who know nothing about pruning, had better do little of it, except to keep the suckers clear from the roots of the tree. Many a tree has been ruined in the northwest by judicious pruning out of the top, and letting in the sun. The branches in this climate should be thick enough to protect one another and the body of the tree. Yet in this climate, we have orchards that have been treated from time to time in this suicidal way, that have some trees that have lived through, and are now ten or twelve inches in diameter. But nine out of ten of the trees are dead. The remainder will follow, one by one, as their constitutional vigor is seriously impaired.

THE CANKER WORM.

In riding through portions of Western New York, we have observed that this formidable insect is rapidly spreading. From the car windows, orchards were often seen, particularly in Ontario County, having that peculiar appearance, as if the leaves had been scorched by flame, which indicates the work of this destroyer. We recall remembering several years ago, hearing of a single orchard in all this region where it had obtained foothold; now it exists in many places, and entire orchards are nearly stripped of foliage. When first breaks out in a town, every one rushes to the spot to extinguish the flames; but when as great a calamity as a fire falls upon fruit trees, no one rushes to the spot nor seems disposed to make any effort to arrest its progress.

The canker worm in its larva state, is a measuring worm, nearly an inch long; ten footed—the perfect female insect nearly without wings, crawling up the trunk of the tree to deposit eggs. The remedies consist therefore in contrivances to prevent the worm from ascending the tree. A belt of canvas or thick paper coated with a mixture of oil and train oil, frequently renewed, has been employed. Circular strips of zinc, about four inches wide, cut so that the outer edge may stand outward and downward, like the rim of an umbrella, have proved very efficient. The insects cannot crawl around this projection. Sheet iron has been tried, but they cling to the rusty edge and get around it.

Those who own fine apple orchards should keep a sharp look-out for these fellows, and finish them immediately on their first appearance. They are much more difficult to exterminate than the common orchard caterpillar, and should therefore be taken in the first place.

Letter from General Hancock.

The following letter from General Hancock was read at the Convention of the Democracy of Pennsylvania:

"St. Paul, Minn., May 21, 1869.

Dear Sir:—I had the pleasure to receive your favor of May 1st last, just before leaving Washington for the West. My occupations have been so pressing that I have not been replying to your communication, and such is to be regretted, for I was as well prepared to express to you my views then as now, and by having promptly written I would have avoided the appearance of hesitancy on the subject concerning which you have addressed me have never changed, and I have freely expressed them to all persons who have in any form inquired of me with respect to them. I am averse to obtruding myself upon the public, and have therefore avoided writing anything for publication, although I have authorized my correspondents to make any other proper use of my sentiments. I write to you with the same limitation as to the purpose to which my letter may be applied and for the same reason.

I feel highly honored by the preference shown me in old Northampton, as expressed in your letter, but, notwithstanding the high honor which you propose to confer by casting your influence for me in the forthcoming convention for Governor, now close at hand, I must state, and without reservation, that, under existing circumstances, I cannot permit the use of my name in that connection. Were it in civil life, I should be more agreeable to me than to be Governor of Pennsylvania. I have, however, followed the profession of arms since boyhood, and now that I have acquired the military rank, do not wish to abandon it and enter upon a life for which I am much less prepared by experience or education.

In declining to permit the use of my name, I have not intended to do injury to your cause to the State, for there are numbers of distinguished men, knowing its interests far better than myself, whom the people would be pleased to honor, and who could render more efficient service to the people of Pennsylvania than myself.

I am, truly,
Your obedient servant,
WILFRED SCOTT HANCOCK."

The Memphis Convention.

The Southern convention at Memphis, for the purpose of organizing a party to be getting along very fast. Its affairs are not at present an entirely satisfactory look. Koopmanschap, the great importer of Chinese labor, is on the spot, but he falls very far short of holding out the favorable terms which the Southern people have all along been led to expect. The yellow gentleman of the difficult name says that he must have a hundred dollars per head in advance for the transportation of the piggish operatives, and that these must have twelve dollars in gold per month as their wages. This is so entirely different from and beyond what has been expected that the whole affair seems not unlikely to fall through.

We have no idea that the convention will enter into any arrangement for paying a hundred dollars per head, importation money, for Chinese immigrants, for they would have no recourse if the Chinese should die soon after their arrival, or prove sickly, incompetent, treacherous, or otherwise worthless; and, unless we are mistaken, twelve dollars per month in gold is more than has been paid for either black or white labor. The people have read and heard about the Chinese, and are probably led to find its way into the country as other labor does or not find it at all. We have confidence that the delegates at Memphis, who are said to be worthy representatives of the wisdom and judgment of the Southern people, will perform satisfactorily the duties assigned to them.—*Courier-Journal*.

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